

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 0740

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, LT
SUBJECT: NEW LESOTHO AMBASSADOR TO UN

1. AGRICULTURE MINISTER (FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER) J.R.L. KOTSOKOANE TOLD ME INFORMALLY AND CONFIDENTIALLY (IT HAS NOT BEEN ANNOUNCED HERE) THAT PRIMIN HAS ASKED HIM TO ASSUME POSITION AS NEW LESOTHO AMBASSADOR AT UN REPLACING MOOKI MOLAPO. FROM HIS BRIEF EXPLANATION HE WILL ALSO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LESOTHO'S WASHINGTON EMBASSY THOUGH HE WILL BE ACCREDITED IN NEW YORK.

2. KOTSOKOANE SAID PRIMIN WANTS TO HAVE SOMEONE IN NEW YORK WHO CAN BE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR LESOTHO'S AFFAIRS IN UNITED NATIONS DURING CURRENT PERIOD OF INCREASED INVOLVEMENT WITH UN AS RESULT OF DIFFICULTIES ON BORDERS WITH TRANSKEI AND SOUTH AFRICA.

3. KOTSOKOANE CLAIMS WIFE AND FAMILY ARE RELUCTANT TO LEAVE COUNTRY AT THIS TIME BUT HE IS OBVIOUSLY LOOKING FORWARD TO EXCITING ASSIGNMENT IN FIELD OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS WHICH IS HIS SECOND LOVE. PRIMIN HAS OFFERED TO ALLOW KOTSOKOANE TO RETAIN CABINET RANK INCLUDING RETENTION OF MASERU HOME DURING NEW YORK ASSIGNMENT.

4. KOTSOKOANE EMPHASIZED HIS INTENTION TO EXPLOIT NEW YORK ASSIGNMENT TO THE FULLEST IN GETTING OUT ON THE HUSTINGS TO BRING
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LESOTHO'S CASE TO AMERICAN PEOPLE BEYOND NEW YORK/WASHINGTON CORRIDOR.

5. COMMENT: NEW YORK IS ABOUT TO RECEIVE LESOTHO'S MOST PERSONABLE, ENERGETIC AND LOQUACIOUS CABINET MINISTER. KOTSOKOANE IS A MAN OF GREAT ENERGY, SKILL AND PERSUASIVENESS. HE COMES ON STRONG AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO PURUSE HIS NEW ASSIGNMENT WITH

VIGOR AND PERSISTENCE. HE IS AMERICAN-EDUCATED AGRICULTURIST (IOWA STATE) AND GOOD FRIEND OF THE U.S. KOTSOKOANE HAS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH ASST. SYG ABBY FARAH AND MANY ACQUAINTANCES INCLUDING SOME IN COMMUNIST REGIMES, E.G. NORTH KOREA, IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DATING FROM HIS TIME AS GOL FONMIN. HE BELIEVES LESOTHO SHOULD SEEK WIDEST POSSIBLE CIRCULE OF DIPLOMATIC CONNECTIONS IN ALL CAMPS. SOUTH AFRICAN BORN, KOTSOKOANE IS ONE OF THE MORE COOL-HEADED ON LESOTHO'S CONFRONTATION WITH THE SAG. STOKES

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